

Toledo

Public library

THE TOLEDO
PUBLIC LIBRARY



A Century of Progress
1838 - 1938

Toledo-Lucas County Public Library



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Local
hist.

RAKGV



MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING—*Madison Avenue and Ontario Street*

THE
TOLEDO PUBLIC LIBRARY



A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

1838-1938

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SIGMOND SANGER, 1918, *President* 1919
H. A. KNOWLSON, 1935, *Vice-President* 1938
MRS. E. F. BRUCKER, 1922 HENRY T. BOWERS, 1936
GEORGE W. PEARSON, 1922 C. B. RAIRDON, 1936
*ROBERT NEWBEGIN, 1937

RUSSELL J. SCHUNK, *Librarian and Secretary-Treasurer*, 1937

(*Members of the Board have served continuously from date shown*)

The Toledo Public Library is the Public Library of the School District of the City of Toledo, an area somewhat larger than the municipality. Members of the Board are appointed by the Board of Education for seven-year terms, one term ending each year. The Library Board is an independent body wholly responsible for the management and control of the Library.

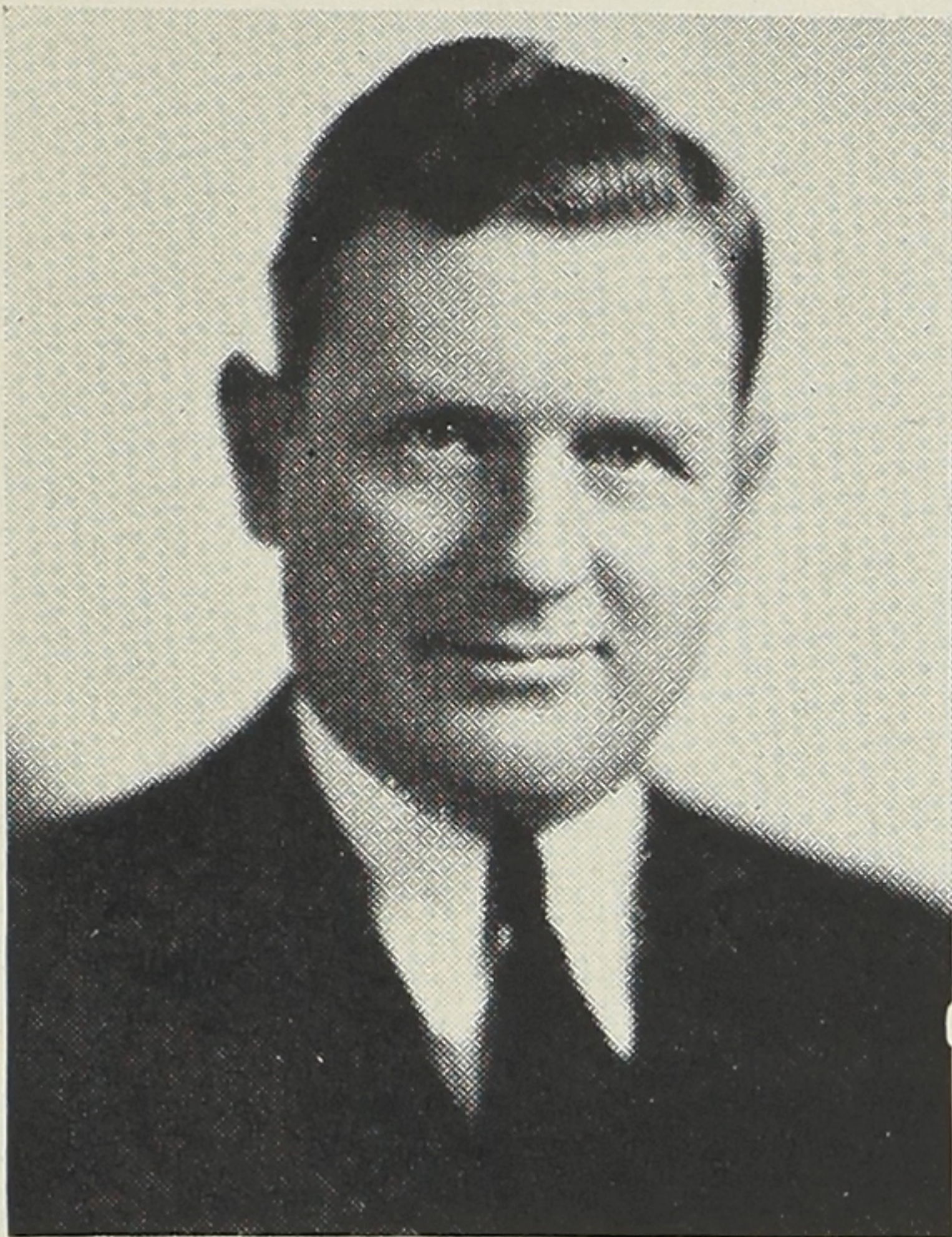
LIBRARY DIRECTORY

RUSSELL J. SCHUNK-----*Librarian*
WALTER BRAHM-----*Assistant to the Librarian and*
Head of Technology Department
ELIZABETH BARRETT-----*Head of Circulating Department*
ELIZABETH GASSAWAY-----*Head of Reference Department*
ETHEL C. WRIGHT-----*Supervisor of Work with Children*
MARGURITE AINSWORTH-----*Head of Order Department*
WINIFRED RIGGS-----*Head of Branch Department*
EFFIE G. ABRAHAM-----*Head of Catalog Department*

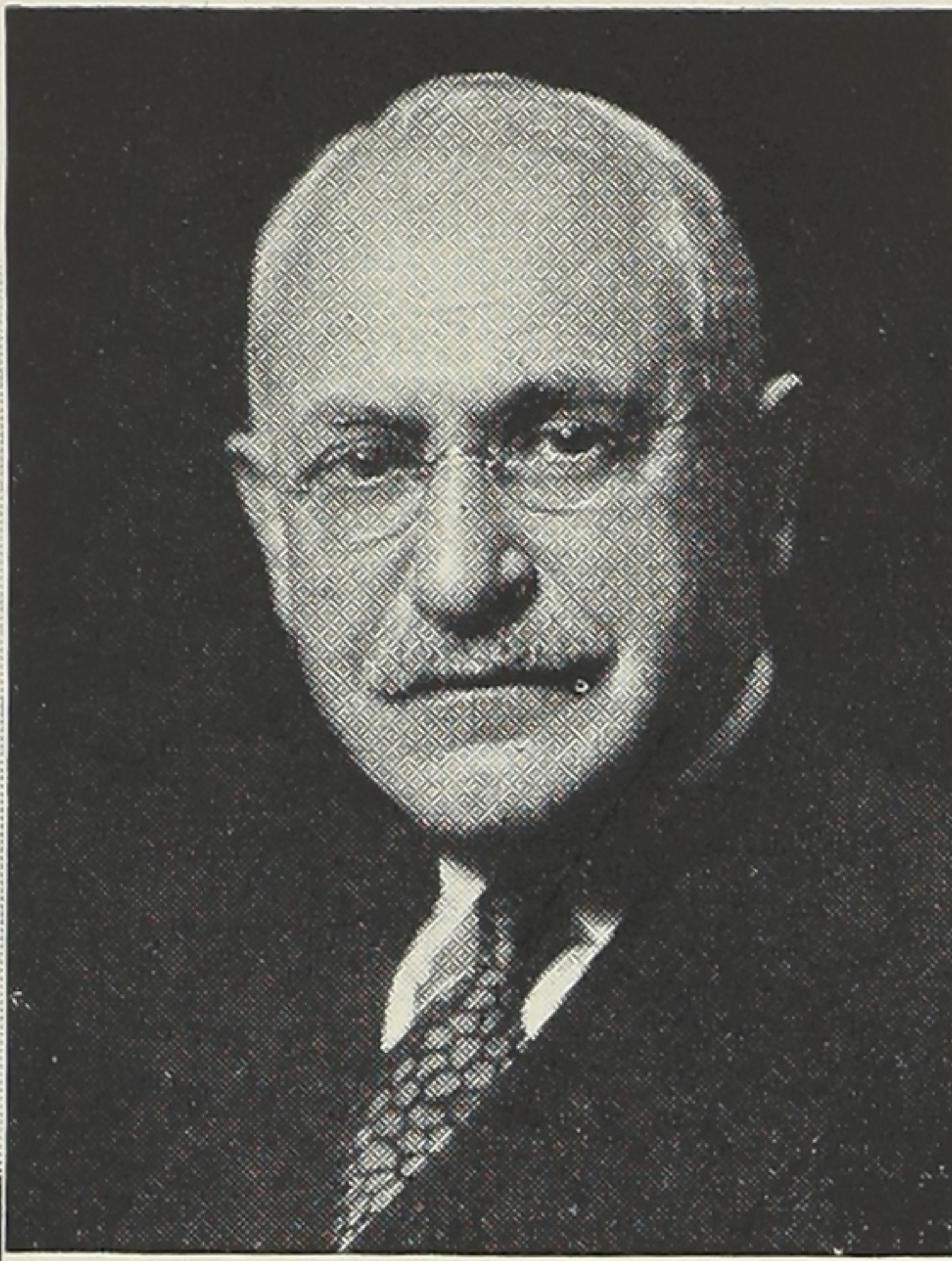
BRANCH LIBRARIES

BIRMINGHAM—Genesee and Paine-----Margaret McCarthy
HALE—Hale School, Shenandoah and Foster-----Hope Packard
JERMAIN—Galena and Superior-----Elizabeth Mayberry
KENT—Collingwood and Central-----Ida Knox
LAGRANGE-CENTRAL—Lagrange and Central-----Barbara Murphy
LOCKE—Greenwood and Main-----Mary Kesler
MCKINLEY—McKinley School, W. Central and Upton--Helen Swineheart
MOTT—Dorr and Forest-----Luella Gilson
NAVARRE—Navarre School, Navarre and Kingstown---Beth Cora Bunker
OAKDALE—Oakdale School, Oakdale and E. Broadway-----Wilma Kuhr
POINT PLACE—131st Street-----Pauline Meckley
SOUTH—Broadway and Langdon-----Harriet Calkins
TOLEDO HEIGHTS—423 Shasta Drive-----Lillian Baumgardner
WEST TOLEDO—Sylvania at Willys Parkway-----Daisy Terry

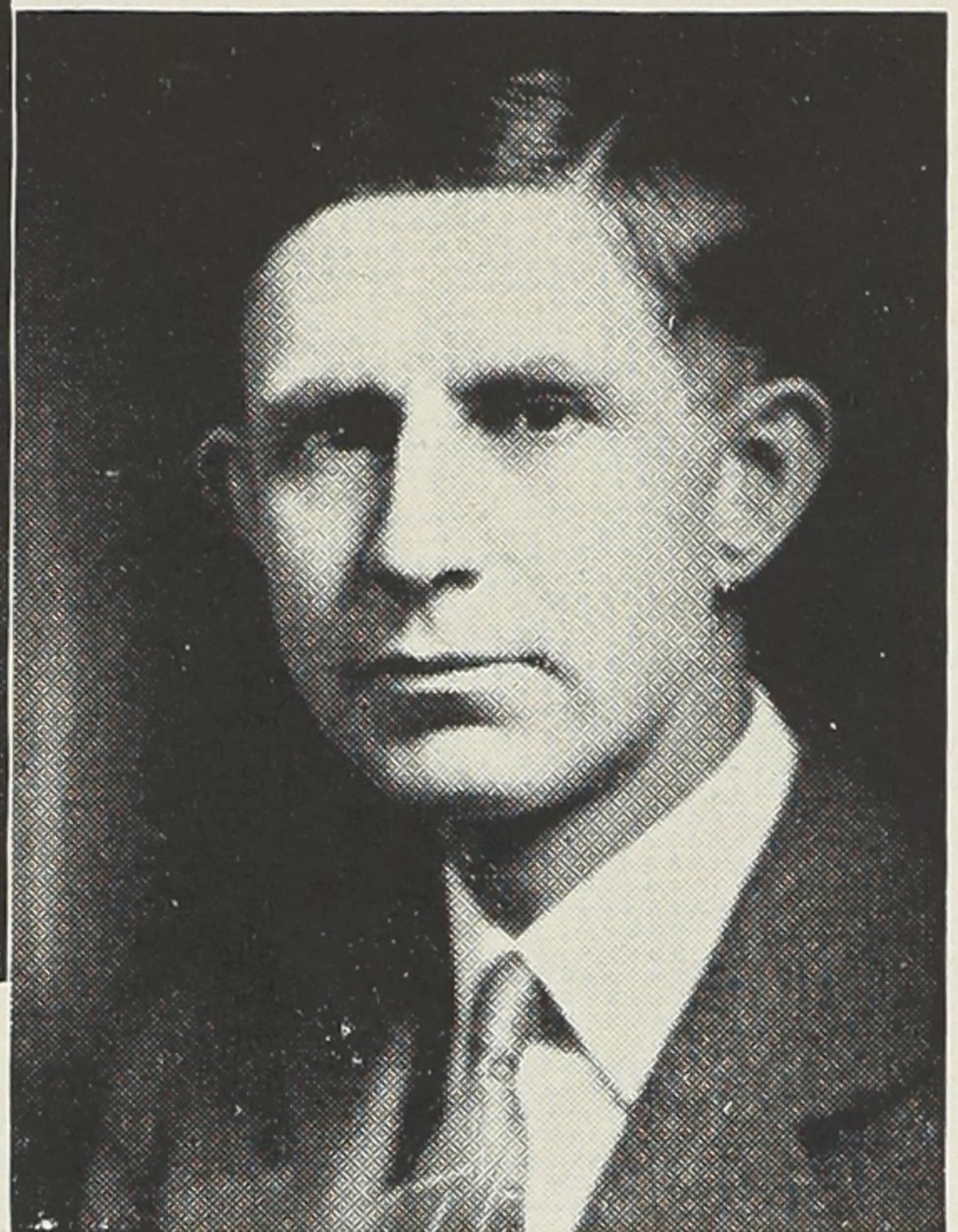
*deceased November 22, 1938.



H. A. KNOWLSON



SIGMOND SANGER

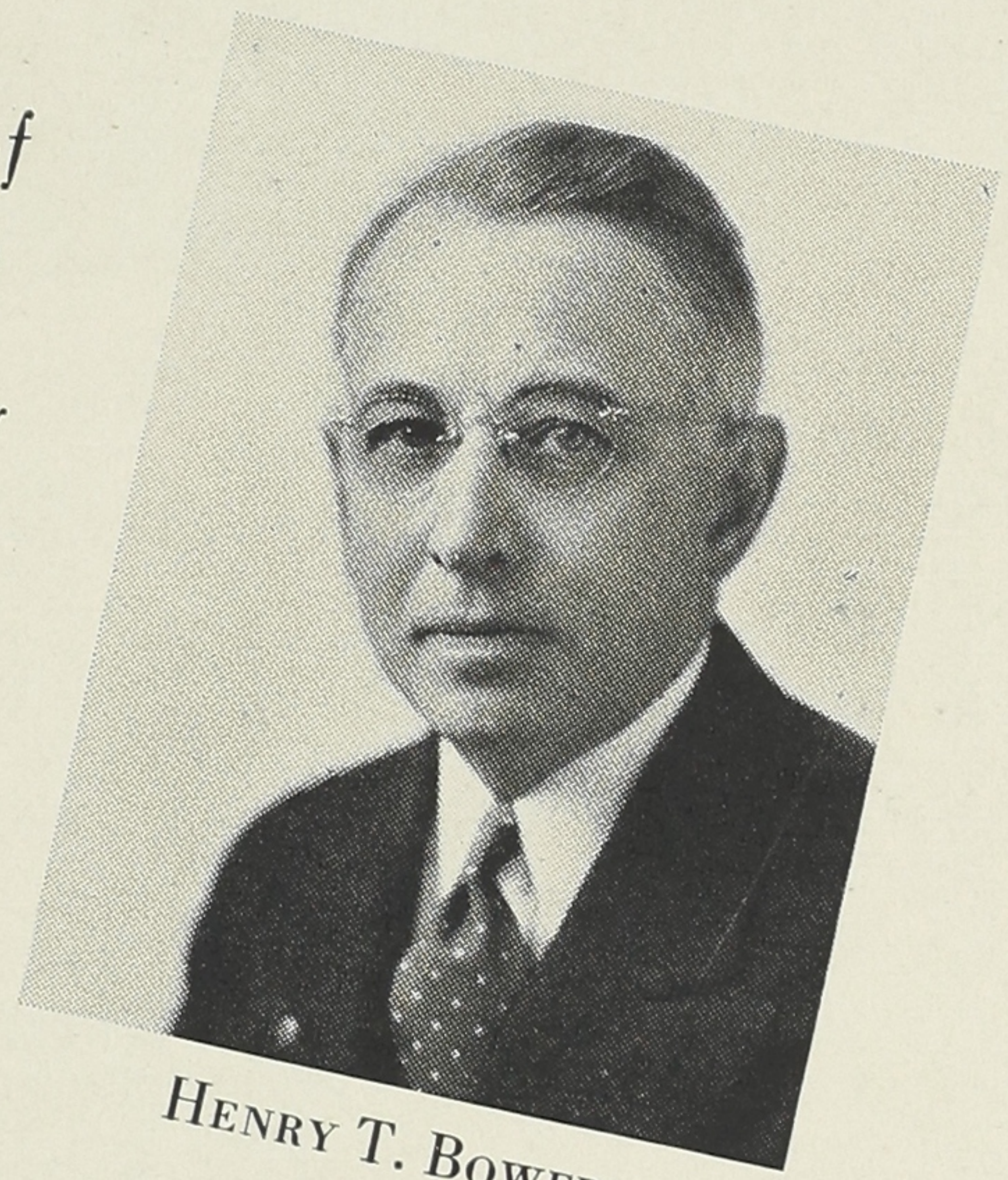


C. B. RAIRDON

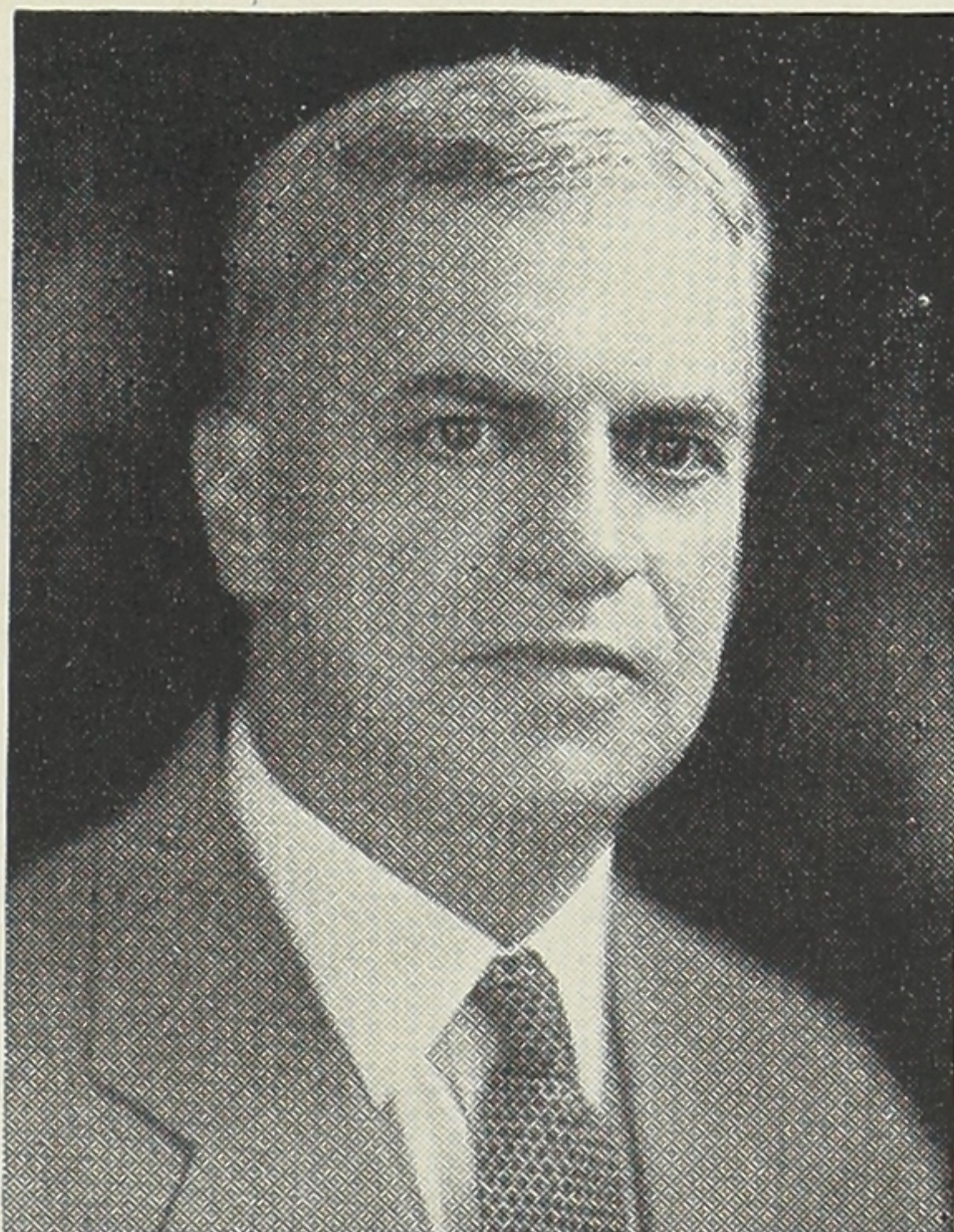


MRS. E. F. BRUCKER

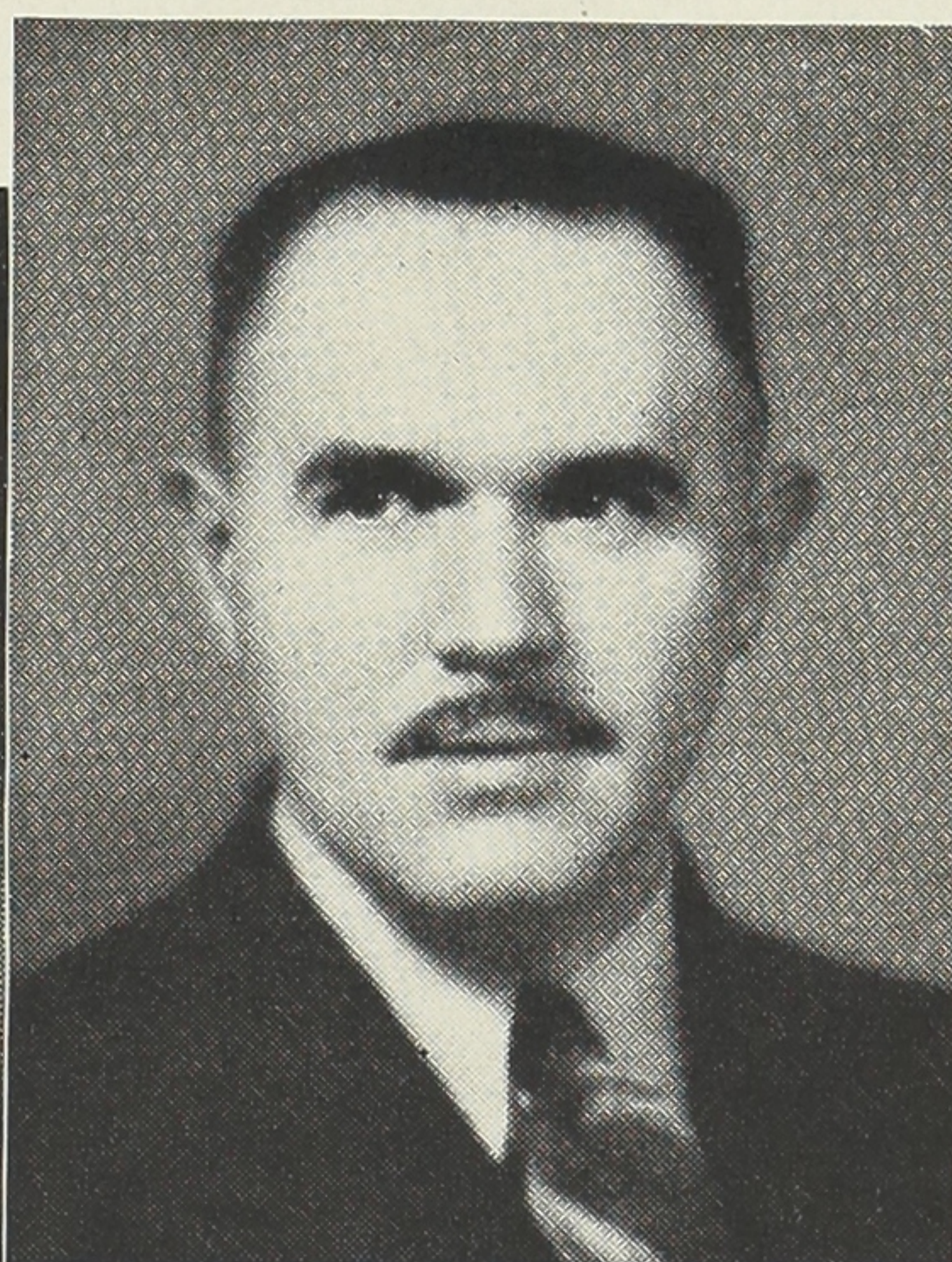
*Members of
the Board
of Library
Trustees*



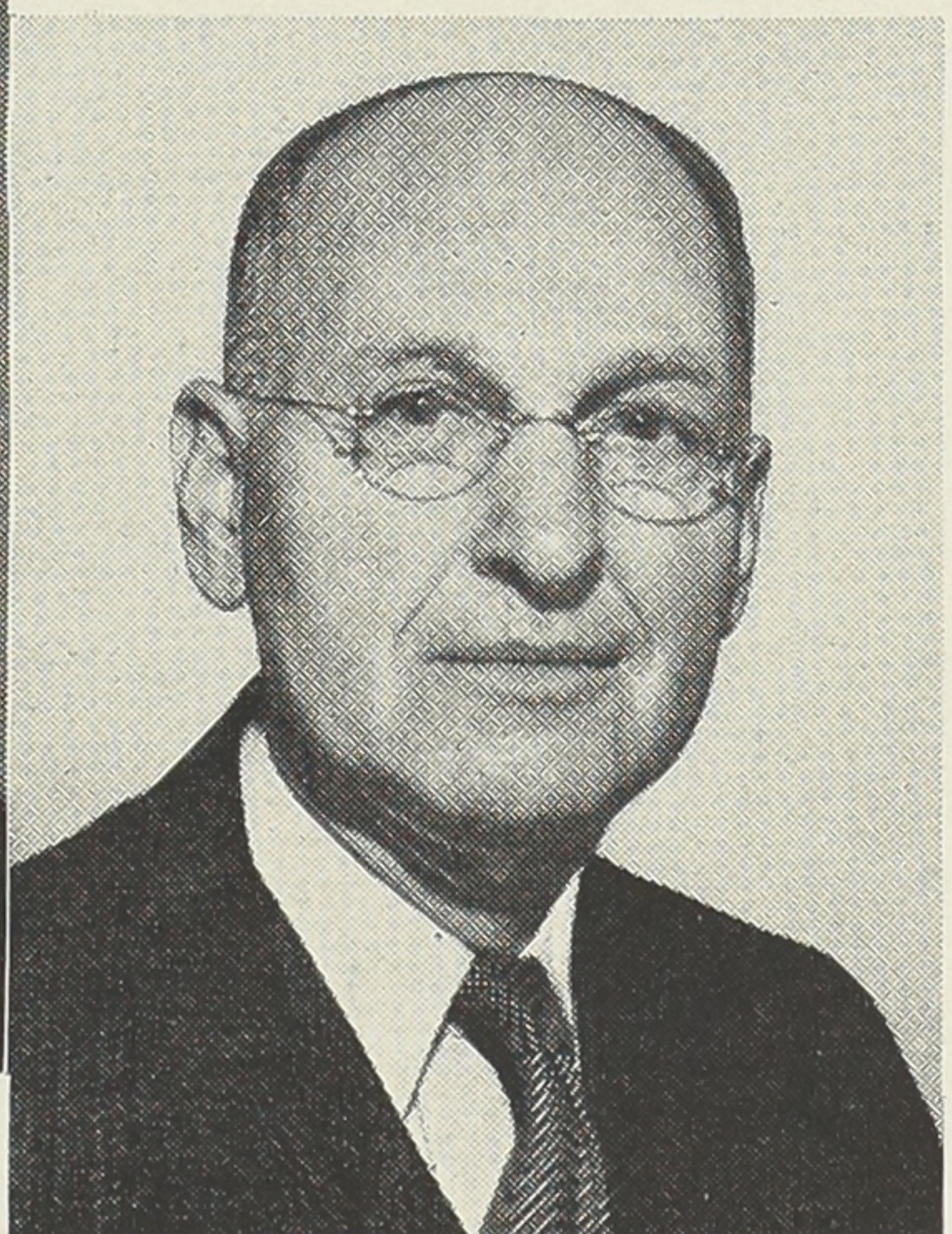
HENRY T. BOWERS



ROBERT NEWBEGIN



RUSSELL J. SCHUNK



GEORGE W. PEARSON



KENT BRANCH — *Collingwood and Central*

*The great consulting room
of a wise man is a library.*

—GEORGE DAWSON



THE TOLEDO PUBLIC LIBRARY



THE SELDOM-REALIZED FACT that our library, through its numerous agencies, plays a more active role than any other single community enterprise in the daily life of Toledo is clearly brought out by an examination of some of the significant trends of the last few years. Cold statistics reveal the extent to which our people, striving valiantly against the vicissitudes of economic difficulty, have turned to the printed page for guidance. This constant thirst for knowledge demonstrates only too clearly Carlyle's statement that "the true university of these days is a collection of books."

A circulation of close to 2,000,000 volumes from the library's shelves (and incidentally in the library system there are over 10 miles of shelves packed with books,) furnishes clear witness of the fact that more and more of our people are turning to the public library. Indeed over 330,000 persons referred to the files of the main library alone during 1937. Since the library is celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of library service in Toledo it might be of interest to give a short history of this service and review the varied activities of the agencies of the Toledo Public Library.

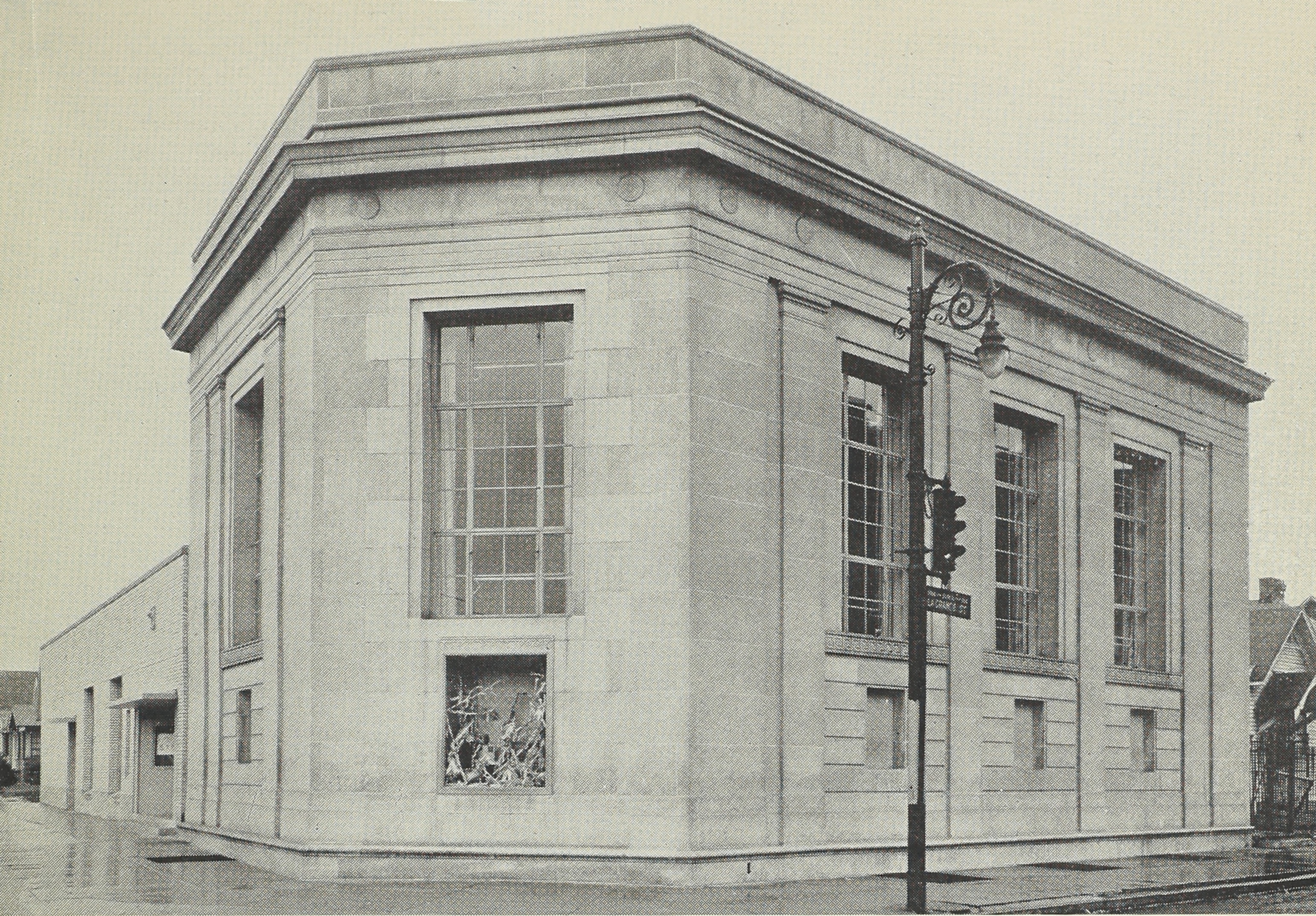
In December 1838, just one hundred years ago, the Toledo Young Men's Association was organized, under a charter granted by the Ohio legislature, the object of this society being to establish "a lyceum and public library in Toledo." This was the small beginning of the large institution, which is now the Toledo Public Library. At this time, Toledo

was a striving city of approximately 1,000 inhabitants. By 1845, the association owned 500 volumes, and members were charged a fee of two dollars per year for the use of the library. By 1864, the membership of the society had increased from the original group of 66 until it now numbered 150. This group also supported a reading room supplied with newspapers and periodicals, and sponsored a course of lectures, for it was a time when lectures were the dissipation of young and old. The same year, the association reorganized under the name, Toledo Library Association, and the property and affairs of the Toledo Young Men's Association were turned over to this new group.

In 1867, the library, now thirty years old, contained approximately 4,600 volumes, and 15,000 books were circulated annually. In 1873, a free public library was organized by an act of the legislature. The library was located at Summit Street and Madison Avenue in the King block opposite the site of the present Waldorf Hotel. The Library Association

TOLEDO HEIGHTS BRANCH — *423 Shasta Drive*



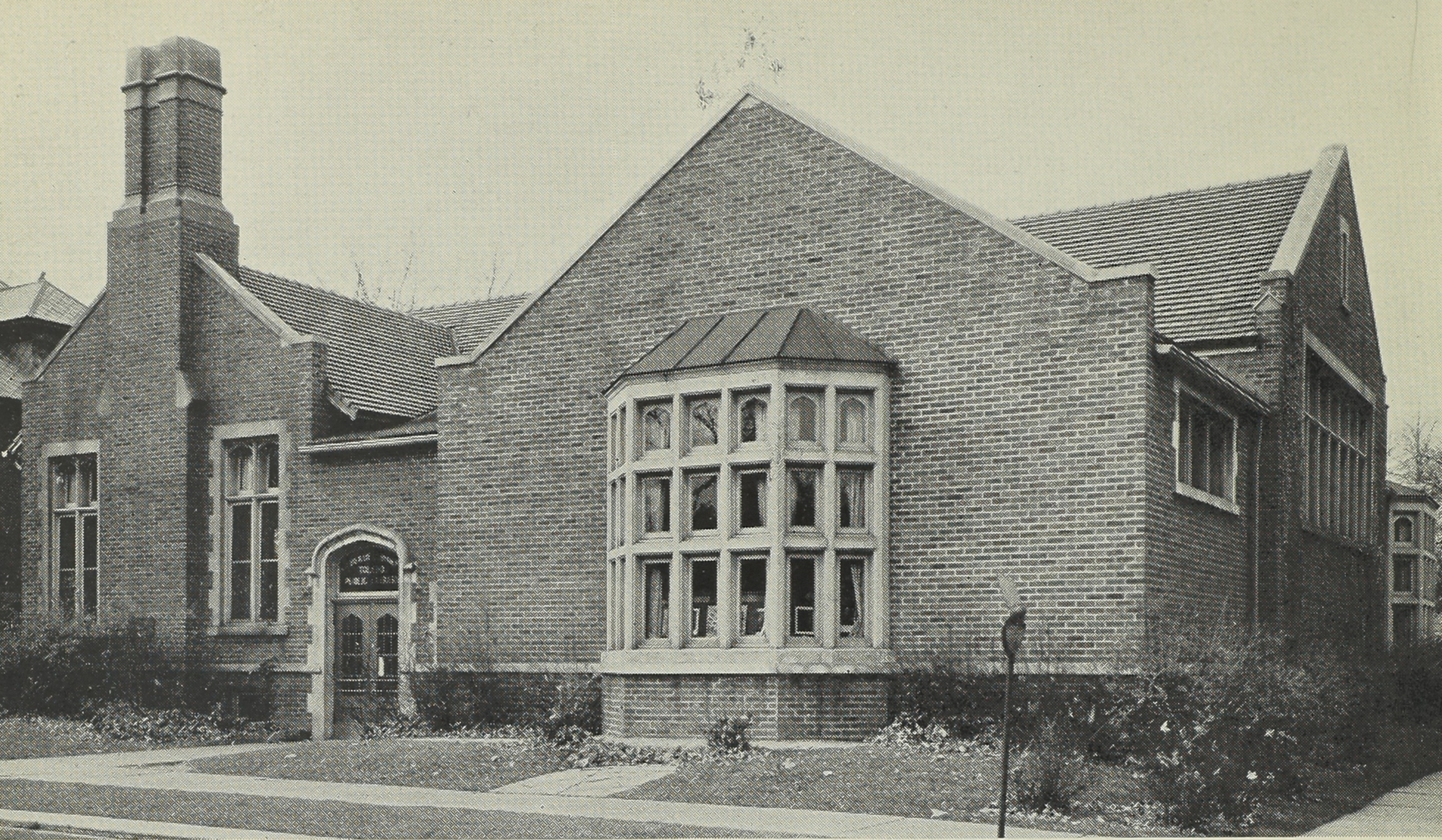


LAGRANGE-CENTRAL BRANCH — *Lagrange and Central*

then transferred its property and books to the new Toledo Public Library; thus, Toledo, now had a free tax supported library available to everyone. The new library opened to the public, November 3, 1873. It had a collection of 6,198 volumes and issued about 4,500 books the first month it was open.

Toledo may well be proud of the fact that it was the first city in Ohio to provide its citizens with a free independent library.

In 1888, a new site for the library on Madison and Ontario streets was secured, and the present building was erected. It was opened to the public, June 23, 1890. An interesting thing about the present building is the fact that it stands on the site of the old Miami and Erie canal bed. The building cost \$75,000, and a new addition was made to it in 1914, at a cost of \$55,000.



LOCKE BRANCH — *Greenwood and Main*

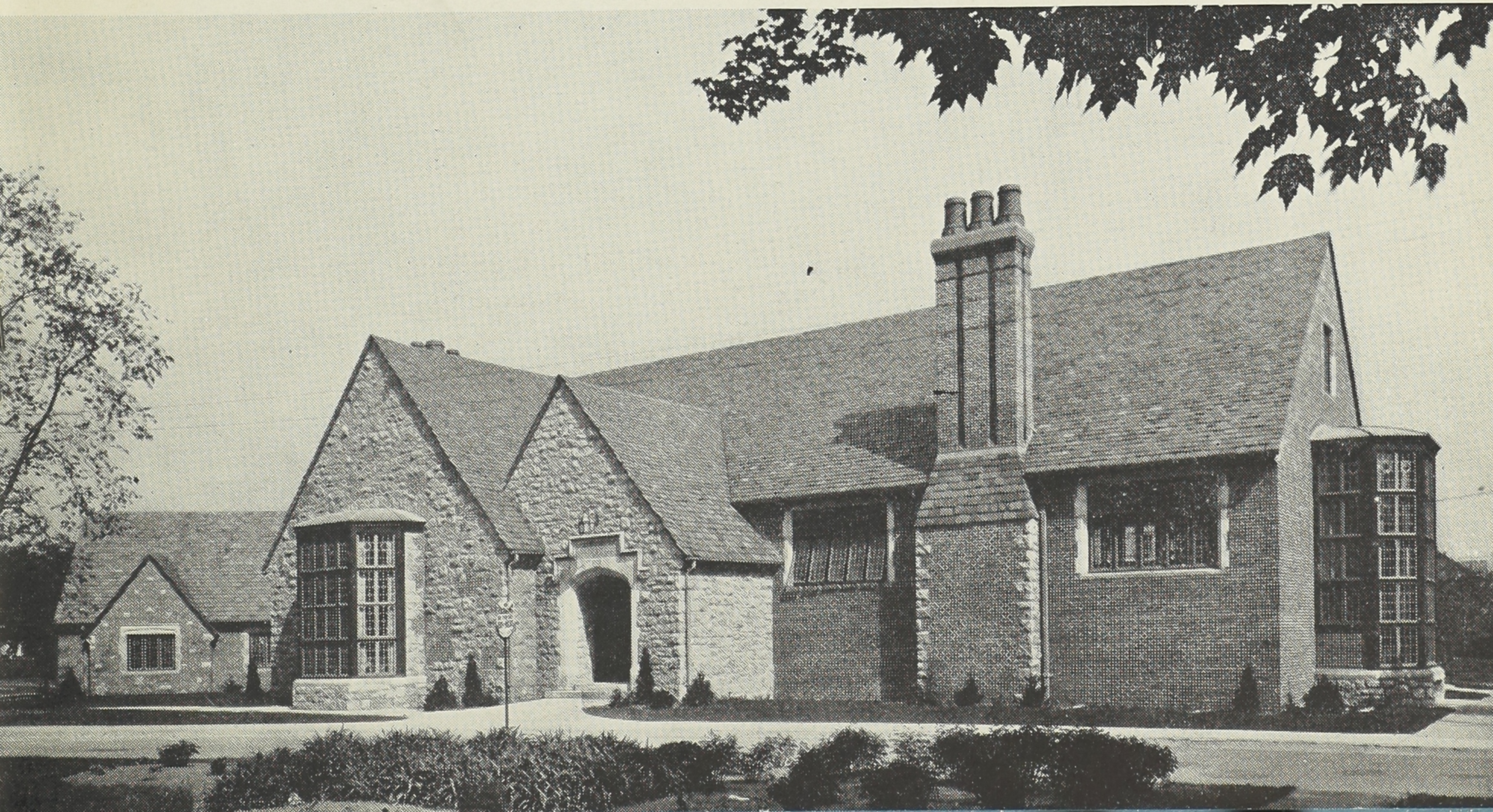
As it exists today, the Toledo Public Library is a big business. Here are some of the figures which show the complexity of the work and the amount of service that has been provided to the citizens of Toledo. The library contains about 400,000 books, or more than one for every citizen. In 1937, 1,700,000 books were issued, which would be five books for each person in Toledo. In addition to the main library, there are 14 branch libraries situated throughout the city, supplemented by 6 stations in public school buildings.

The central library is organized very much like any other large organization. A Main Circulating Department provides books and material for home use in general adult subjects, such as sociology, literature, biography, history, fiction and others. The Technology Department houses the natural science and useful arts collections, while the Reference Department contains valuable works for research. The Children's Department maintains a collection of books which has been carefully selected for

juvenile readers. The Schools Division operates stations and makes available books in certain schools.

To the average person, a public library is thought of as a place to obtain books. While this is true as far as it goes, the furnishing of information from other sources is just as important and vital a service. Names, addresses, advice, how to do this or how to make that, and other types of information are daily provided by the library. In fact, it is not even necessary to make a trip to the library in person to get information. Telephone service is gladly supplied. As an example of this type of service, last year the Technology Department alone answered 24,781 questions, and 2,212 of these were handled by telephone. The Reference and Technology Departments together answer 75,000 questions a year. These range from the vitamin content of beer, tempering of steel, history of refuse collecting, the Indian word for cradle, where Perry's ship had been sunk, the life of a dollar bill, and the color of cigarette smoke, to multiple control devices for automatic machines. Thus, information as well as books is supplied by your library system.

WEST TOLEDO BRANCH — *Sylvania at Willys Parkway*



WORK WITH ADULTS

In the main library, work with Toledo's grown-ups is handled for the most part by the Main Circulating Department, the Reference Department and the Technology Department. There were nearly 60,000 adult borrowers cards in force in 1937. In many cases a single card furnishes books for several members of a family, so that it is evident that this active group of borrowers represents a large section of Toledo's population. Using the Main Circulating Department, they obtained guidance and help from material in the fields of sociology, literature, fine arts, biography, philosophy, history and travel. Those interested in religion and language also found much that was useful. As always, fiction was popular, there being 548,614 volumes of fiction alone in circulation during 1937.

Those who were interested in definite items of information rather than in more general reading frequently sought guidance from the busy workers in the Reference Department. Not only did they seek this information in person—many availed themselves of reference service over the telephone. Let us examine a few of the questions which were propounded by Toledoans during the year. One sought information as to Roosevelt's land holdings in Georgia; another wanted to know how to repair a clarinet. How tall was Martha Washington and what was the color of her hair and eyes? Was the first American flag to be raised on Michigan soil displayed at Detroit or at Monroe? Who was Little Alfred? All these and thousands of others were handled by the Reference Department during the year.

Many interested in scientific, business and technical problems turned to the material in the Technology Department. This department, with its files of technical periodicals, federal and state documents, pamphlets and



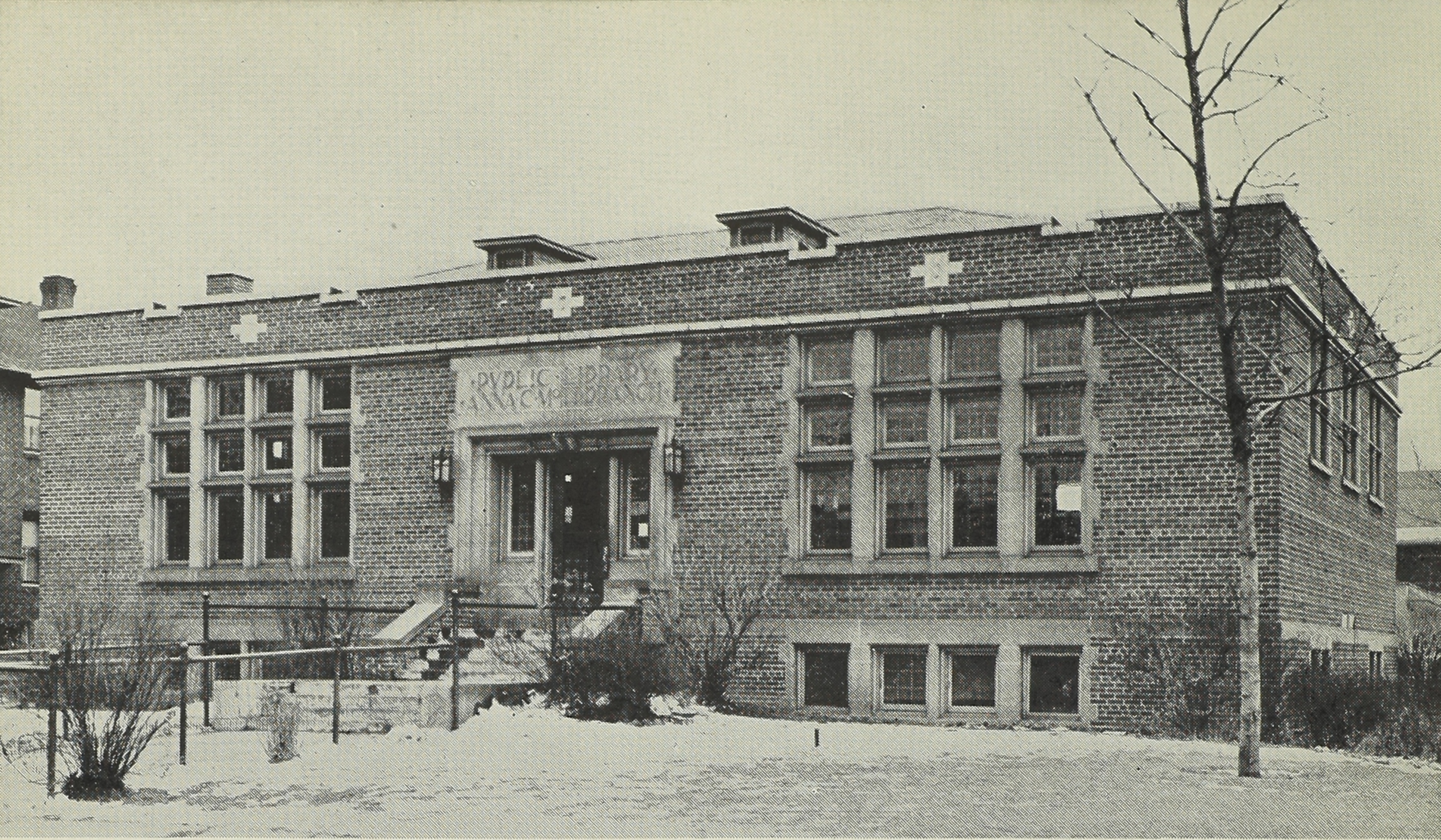
BIRMINGHAM BRANCH — *Genesee and Paine*

trade catalogs supplementing its regular book collection, handled 25,000 questions and circulated over 40,000 books in 1937.

Many persons actually secured jobs through the study of this department's material. Air conditioning engineers and those interested in diesel engineering profited by their studies. Stationary engineers and firemen secured licenses after boning up on suggested question and answer books. Former surveyors brushed up on their knowledge to secure jobs on government projects. The excellence of the department's glass collection is shown by the fact that material was borrowed from these files by many outside institutions as well as by the people of Toledo.

WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Realizing that young people require special guidance when transferring their reading interests from the Juvenile Department to the adult collection, the library has come to stress more and more the reading



MOTT BRANCH — *Dorr and Forest*

guidance of these young folks. Certain members of the Main Circulating Department and of the various branch staffs are thoroughly trained to analyze the problems and interests of youth. While this form of library service is being accentuated in most of America's libraries, Toledo is far ahead of many cities in this important development.

AMONG THE YOUNGSTERS

The indefatigable interest of youth in reading is brought out by the fact that 662,455 volumes were taken out by the boys and girls of the community during 1937. This figure of over three-quarters of a million includes juvenile collections, not only in the main library but in the branch libraries, schools, stations and class-rooms. Many moderns claim that the days of Jack and the Bean Stalk, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood and similar imaginary characters are numbered, but apparently the children themselves do not agree, for they took out some 47,901 volumes

of fairy tales during the year. They also showed great interest in travel, natural science and literature.

Every effort is made by the specially trained members of the Children's Department not only to guide the children themselves toward the reading of better books but also to contact the parents, either individually or through parent and teacher association groups, so that the important child guidance which is in their hands is properly directed. Then, too, contacts are made by thoroughly trained branch librarians who are well qualified to work sympathetically and understandingly with the children in different neighborhoods. Story hours establish contact with groups of children. On occasion the department has furnished speakers for school meetings. Reading contests have been sponsored by the Children's Department in order to stimulate the child's interest in reading.

While the Schools Division circulates some adult books the major portion of its work is with children, as is shown by the fact that in 1937,

SOUTH BRANCH — *Broadway and Langdon*



174,313 juvenile books were circulated compared to 10,734 volumes of adult books. The Schools Division maintains station collections at Auburn-dale, Feilbach, Hamilton, Harvard, Irving and Lagrange.

BRANCH LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

September 19, 1938, saw the reopening of the newly remodeled and greatly enlarged Kent Branch, and the establishment of a library agency at Point Place. These events were in line with the branch expansion program started by the Library Board in 1917. The past several years have seen the completion of two new branch libraries—Lagrange-Central and Toledo Heights and the remodeling of Locke Branch. As the result of much community interest the Library Board purchased a former branch bank building at the corner of Central Avenue and Lagrange Street and remodeled it into as fine an example of a modernistic library as one may find anywhere. The book collection from Webster School was moved into these quarters and a great deal of new material added. It is safe to say that the people in the Lagrange-Central district take as much pride in their neighborhood library as do those in any other section of Toledo.

Every effort has been made to keep the branch book collections up to date and fitted to the needs of the neighborhoods. This has taken a great deal of careful planning on the part of the Branch Department. Scientific as well as cultural material has been covered systematically and when necessary obsolete material has been discarded and needed volumes recommended. Inventories of branch book stocks have been carefully made and the physical condition of books has been maintained at as high a standard as funds would permit.

Toledo may well be proud of its fine branch system—a system which



JERMAIN BRANCH — *Galena and Superior*

ranks as one of the most progressive in the library field. It is to be hoped that increased support will enable the branch library system to go back to a program of complete daily service to the neighborhoods in place of the curtailed hours necessary at present.

THE LIBRARY BOARD

This report of a century of progress would be utterly incomplete without well merited mention being made of the work of the Library Board. This group of public-spirited citizens, whose only remuneration for loyal service is the honor of serving the people, has, by careful management, maintained high standards of library service, despite the vicissitudes of tax incomes.

